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ATTORNEY SEEKS LIGHT SENTENCE FOR ARMY IMPOSTER
MONTGOMERY, AL

The attorney for a man accused of posing as a military officer for four months said Saturday his client is hoping only for a light sentence.

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Alan Everett Goetsch Jr., 34, of Red Bluff, Cal., who claims he is a CIA agent on secret assignment, pleaded guilty Friday to impersonating an Army captain at Fort Rucker near Dothan.

Goetsch's attorney, Jerry Herring, indicated Goetsch will throw himself on the mercy of the court, but still claims he works for the CIA.

"I just hope the judge will give us consideration in sentencing when he hears the story," Herring said. "I just can't believe he went to all that trouble just as a fantasy."

He could be imprisoned for three years and fined \$250,000 if convicted. Goetsch was being held in a Montgomery jail on \$10,000 bond this weekend.

Prosecutors said they would oppose probation for Goetsch.

"I would absolutely object to probation," said Charles Truncale, an assistant U.S. district attorney. "I feel the evidence is clear the he committed the crime. He pled guilty to what he was charged with."

Goetsch was arrested April 10 at Fort Rucker near Dothan. Authorities said he used forged documents to gain access to Fort Rucker and Fort Benning, Ga. to participate in training exercises, including parachute jumps.

Goetsch told military authorities and the FBI, and still contends, that he was sent to Fort Rucker by the CIA to research medical relief projects in Central America.

A CIA spokeswoman said Goetsch is only one of many who falsely claim they work for the CIA to avoid prosecution.

"We get charges such as his all the time," said Patty Volz. "It's a favorite for people to hang their hat on the CIA. We can't respond to all those allegations or we'd be doing it all the time."

A federal grand jury handed down a 10-count indictment against Goetsch Friday. Assistant U.S. Attorney Charles Truncale said the impersonation charge was retained and the other nine were dropped in exchange for the guilty plea.

Truncale said all the other charges related to events that occurred while Goetsch posed as an Army captain from Jan. 1 through April 9. He was charged with obtaining military housing, unauthorized use of a military vehicle and obtaining airline tickets while posing as a captain."

Authorities said Goetsch had forged papers showing he had served in the military since the early 1970s.

A sentencing hearing will be held within the next 30 days, officials said.